UNCLAS MAPUTO 000547

SIPDIS
DEPARTMENT FOR PRM/MLANGE
E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PREF RW MZ
SUBJECT: RWANDAN REPATRIATION SET TO BEING THIS SUMMER

REF: A. STATE 73331

¶B. MAPUTO 7156

¶1. Econ/pol officer delivered points (ref A) on the 10th
anniversary of the Rwanda genocide to officials from the
National Institute to Support Refugees (INAR) and discussed
the status of the repatriation of Rwandan refugees with local
UNHCR reps. Both INAR and UNHCR noted that the repatriation
process is still in the initial phase and that, as a
voluntary program, large scale repatriation is unlikely in
the near-term (ref B). According to UNHCR, three Rwandan
refugees have been voluntarily repatriated since the signing
of the tripartite agreement in December 2003. UNHCR and INAR
are currently implementing an information campaign on the
voluntary repatriation program which will begin in June/July
of this year. Part of the information campaign will include a
trip to the Marratane refugee camp in Nampula by a small
group of recently repatriated Rwandans to talk about their
experiences.

¶2. INAR officials are sensitive to the fact that the program
is voluntary and is working closely with UNHCR on the
information campaign. However, both UNHCR and INAR
acknowledge that repatriation may be a hard sell. In many
cases, the reluctance of Rwandan refugees to be repatriated
stems from economic rather than security related concerns. A
number of current Rwandan refugees at Marratane are
professionals working in Nampula city. A new community center
and several water/irrigation projects implemented with USG
funding (septel) have also expanded work opportunities at the
camp. However, with the camp close to its capacity of 5,000,
(the camp currently houses over 4,800 refugees, with 100-150
new arrivals each month, principally from the Great Lakes
region), successful repatriation of refugees is critical to
easing the strain on camp resources.?
LA LIME